

## PUBLIC SMOKING AND INDOOR AIR QUALITY

**CLAIM:** SMOKING SHOULD BE BANNED IN PUBLIC PLACES BECAUSE TOBACCO SMOKE ANNOYS PEOPLE AND CONTRIBUTES TO POOR INDOOR AIR QUALITY.

### RESPONSES:

- Indoor air quality measurements taken under normal, everyday conditions indicate that the contribution of tobacco smoke to the air we breathe is minimal.(1) For example, typical nicotine measurements (which are particularly revealing because nicotine is unique to tobacco smoke) range from an exposure equivalent of 1/100 to 1/1000 of one filter cigarette per hour.(2) That means a nonsmoker would have to spend from 100 to 1000 hours in an office, restaurant or public place in order to be exposed to the nicotine equivalent of a single cigarette.
- Tobacco smoke may be an annoyance or nuisance to some people but other personal habits and behaviors (overpowering perfume, crying babies) may be equally or more annoying. There are cautions and limits to regulating personal behavior.

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- In the past, people have effectively resolved questions of personal annoyance through courtesy and discussion among themselves without resorting to legislation that necessarily forces the preferences of some on others.
- There are also questions of whether we should expend the already limited public on regulating personal behavior.

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